



TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Recreation Department

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING

January 10, 2007

- I CALL TO ORDER** – A meeting of the Town of Palm Beach Recreation Advisory Commission was held on November 8, 2006, at the Recreation Center. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Michael Spaziani, Chairman at 9:00 a.m. Commission members in attendance were Mr. Spaziani, Mrs. Milissa Agnello, Dr. Timothy Coffield, Ms. Danielle Hickox and Mr. Kenneth Schechet. Alternate members in attendance were Mr. Joseph Della Giustina, Mr. Henry Jamison and Mrs. Rita Taca. Absent from the meeting were Mr. Michael Andrews and Mr. Stuart Shulman. Staff members in attendance were Director Mr. Jay Boodheshwar, Assistant Directors Mr. Alan Brown and Mr. Rod Gardiner, and Office Manager Mrs. Lisa Walkowich.
- II APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA** - Mr. Spaziani asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Hickox made the motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mrs. Agnello, all were in favor.
- III APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 8, 2006 MINUTES** – Mr. Spaziani asked for a motion to approve the November 8, 2006, minutes. Mr. Della Giustina asked that the following corrections be made: 1. Mrs. Agnello's name had been omitted under Section I "Call to Order" and on page 6 item C it was Mr. Della Giustina who made the statement not Mr. Schechet. Mrs. Agnello made the motion to approve the November 8, 2006, minutes with changes. Seconded by Dr. Coffield, all were in favor.
- IV OLD BUSINESS**
- A. Seaview Tennis Construction – Transition Usage Plan Update** - Mr. Boodheshwar said since the last Commission meetings there had been some developments regarding the Seaview Tennis Construction project but that he would address this item after reporting on the transition usage plan. He said that staff has been very successful in securing alternative playing facilities for this summer during the construction period at Seaview. The Palm Beach Country Club, Sloan's Curve and the Beach Point Condominiums were all willing to work with the Town, although agreements are not yet final.

Mr. Boodheshwar said that the Town had contracted with a traffic engineering firm to prepare a comprehensive town wide traffic and parking improvement plan. He was part of the planning team. Mr. Boodheshwar said that in December the executive summary of the plan was presented to Council and at the same time Council had been dealing with traffic complaints associated with the Public and Hebrew School. He said that many neighbors attended the December meeting and

expressed concern about Seaspray Avenue as well as some other streets north, being used as a cut through for buses, parents dropping their children off at the Public School, speeding and general safety concerns for the children.

At the December 2006 meeting, Council decided to make this area the number one priority. Mr. Boodheshwar said that at the January 9th Town Council Meeting the Council took some initial actions in an effort to help the situation. First, Council voted to change the direction of Seaview Avenue to be one way heading east, which would provide a longer area to queue cars in the morning and also to provide an alternative cut through for the parents from the Public School, so that they would not go to Seaspray Avenue. Second was the designation of a school zone so that we can lower the speed limit on Seaview and possibly other streets. The third action was to tentatively delay the construction of the Seaview Tennis Courts to reconsider an elevated facility so that we can provide surface level parking underneath.

Mr. Boodheshwar said that currently we are in the design phase for the original project with sixty percent progress drawings completed as of December 15, 2006. Staff has already reviewed plans and provided feedback. Mr. Boodheshwar said that staff requested from Council permission to go forward and finish the design so that if it was decided not to do the surface parking project, we would be able to move forward with the original project as scheduled. He said that if Council does decide to incorporate an elevated facility, some of the plans will be able to be reused.

Mr. Spaziani said that he went before the Council and asked that if they were going to do the surface parking project that they do this very quickly so that we don't lose this window of opportunity. He said that if we are not going to do the surface parking then lets go ahead and finish up this project as planned. Mr. Spaziani said that the new plan is going to take approximately 1 ½ years to complete and our major hurdle will be what to do with our tennis players. He said that in the long run it will be worth it. We will gain 120 parking spaces, some of which can be allocated to the teachers and get them off the street, eliminating most of our parking issues as well as giving us state of the art tennis courts.

Mr. Boodheshwar said that he wanted to review three major considerations that would need to be discussed; they were the increased cost, the increased time frame for construction and the aesthetics of the structure. He provided some preliminary figures; the tennis expenses related to the project would increase approximately 15-20%, \$500,000 would need to be factored in for elevators and the cost of possibly adding a second story to the pro shop. The parking portion of the project was estimated to cost \$10,000 per space or approximately 1.2 millions dollars. The time frame for the project would be a minimum of 1 ½ years barring complications with the subsurface. The project could begin in April 2008 with the facility opening in November of 2009. Mr. Boodheshwar said that staff would be able to

find alternative playing sites for the summer but in season, it would be very difficult to find site on the island.

Mr. Schechet asked if this parking project was a Recreation Department issue or a Town issue. Mr. Boodheshwar said that it was a Town issue, but Recreation is challenged everyday with the lack of parking. Mr. Schechet asked, if the Town was looking for a recommendation from the Commission. Mr. Boodheshwar said that it was up to the Commission to make a recommendation of they so desired. Mr. Schechet asked if this project had been talked about in the past. Mr. Spaziani said that he had recommended this type of project about a year ago and the Commission had supported it, but that the Council, at that time did not want to go forward. He said that with all the pressure from the community for parking they are reconsidering this as a viable solution.

Mr. Boodheshwar reviewed the proposed strategies from the parking and traffic study for the commission. After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Spaziani asked each commissioner to voice their opinions regarding the parking strategies

Ms. Hickox said that she liked the plan that gave us 156 parking spots. Her concern was for the residents of the Town who play tennis and the 18 months that the project would take. She said that she would hate to go forward with the current project that is only going to leave us with the same parking problems.

Mrs. Agnello said that she agreed with Ms. Hickox. She said that in addition to the courts being down for 18 months she was concerned that a great effort was made to build up a tennis program for juniors and adults and we would be forced to start from scratch again. She felt that we would lose all our pros and that one of the things people like about our facility is the pros and her last concern was how it was going to look.

Mrs. Boodheshwar stated that one of the ideas that staff had was to have a multi level facility. He said that it had not been discussed with Council but had been discussed with the consultants. The idea was to have the first two courts at surface level, maintaining the pro shop and then elevate from the third court on, giving us 7 courts. It would reduce the amount of parking spaces but still give us more than we have now.

Mr. Jamison said that he liked a plan that was not tied to the school so that the Town could have more control. I liked the plan with the elevated tennis courts saying that it was a long term solution. He said that he shared Mrs. Agnello's concerns over the aesthetics but felt that anything that could be done to improve the situation at Seaview was positive. He said that he was less concerned about losing pros, that they were a fluid bunch coming and going and felt that to base our decision on the whims of the pros was not the best judgment. He also felt that the last thing, the tennis teams, I do share some concern with but I also believe that after the facility is built those team members will return.

Mrs. Taca said that we needed the parking spaces and we needed to have a tennis facility for everybody. She said that she understands about the time limits that are involved, but how do you stop progress when the need really is for the parking facility. She said that we have been seeking a solution and we've seen this type of facility in operation at other places. She felt that if the council has told us to go ahead with the design then I think they have a very open mind to this particular type of project.

Mr. Schechet said that not having been involved in the previous discussion it's a bit to swallow all at once. Of the things that we have looked at this appears to be the only viable option; you did say quickly that there may be some combination of these other things that would provide a critical mass of space without elevating the courts and that seems to me to be something worth working out and seeing if there really is another viable alternatives. At this moment what we are looking at is the only viable one unless some combination of all the others does something for us.

Mr. Della Guistina said that the only way to solve this issue was to go ahead with the raised tennis facility. It will solve the problems we have always had with parking. He felt that people would be able to find different places to play during the construction.

Dr. Coffield said that he agreed with everyone that if we were going to defer from the current plan, that the raised courts would be the only alternative. He felt that maybe we were rushing into this new plan and felt that more study should be done before going ahead with the project. He said that we needed to think about doing whatever we can to improve the current courts if it was found that the raised court plan was not viable.

Mr. Spaziani said, "I truly believe that the surface parking is the way to go; it solves all problems. I have grave concerns about parking plan concept A, which affects everybody's property values adjacent to the Day School's west field. You have to look at whether your backing up to a green space vs. a parking lot and your looking at some heavy duty litigation involved in that. As an appraiser I would think common area vs. parking lot; if you want to write me a check for half a million dollars, I have no problem with that. So I think there is going to be some major litigation involved in that. I would give you a couple of scenarios living behind the day school. When I first moved there, there was nothing behind my house. Eventually they put this chiller in there and I still have problems with Mr. Thompson. There were some baffles that cut down the noise, this thing is extremely loud. The hurricanes came through the baffles got knocked off and I have been contacting Mr. Thompson four or five times and talked about him yesterday about the noise from that thing. I sit in my back yard by my pool and I literally have to yell to have a conversation. Then they put a mobile home behind my house. At this point in time I had my pool being worked on so there is nothing behind my house; so now I'm looking at this chiller and now I'm looking at this

mobile home and then one day I come home from work and there's a school bus parked literally 40 feet from my back door and this guy is spray painting this school bus. Well you can imagine the conversation I had with Mr. Thompson at that point in time. We have to be very sensitive to these people who live in this area so at this point Concept A as far as I'm concerned is not viable. The other concerns I have are; these are good ideas but once again as Dr. Coffield said with these angle parking we are going to back up into traffic and hold up a lot of the traffic flow so I have problems with... It's a good idea that eliminates some of the problems that we have but your also complicating the problems so at this point in time I believe that the only solution that we have is the surface parking with the elevated facility. We do have major problems, we have time constraints, we have the tennis players to consider and I think that's going to be our major hurdle."

After further discussion Mr. Della Guistina made the motion that the Commission is in favor of a project that would provide surface parking with raised tennis courts. Seconded by Ms. Hickox, all were in favor.

Mr. Schechet said that we also need to note that if the Council decides to go ahead with this project we are prepared to work out the details on how to minimize the effect on the tennis players and also we have a responsibility to keep our tennis players and other users of the facility informed.

- B. FY-06 Business Plan Report** – Mr. Boodheshwar said he had provided the business plan, the Town's FY-07 Budget and the Long Term Financial Plan on a CD for each of the commissioners to review.

V NEW BUSINESS

Seaview Multipurpose Field Upgrade – Mr. Boodheshwar said that at previous meetings there had been discussion on converting the athletic field from grass to a synthetic surface. He said that recently he had met with a small group of residents who are interested in providing funding to get this project done this year. Mr. Boodheshwar said that the Day Academy has also been approached about helping to fund the project, which would cost between \$500,000 - \$700,000 with out lights and \$800,000 - \$1,000,000 with lights. After some discussion Mr. Spaziani made the motion that staff pursue funding for the athletic field upgrade and take any action necessary with the Town Council to get the project approved and completed this year. Seconded by Mr. Della Guistina, all were in favor.

VI ANY OTHER MATTERS

- A. Staff Report** – Mr. Boodheshwar said that the Director's Report the commission had been receiving had been enhanced and is now a staff report. He said that staff wanted to keep the commission more informed on what's going on in the department as a whole and on a more consistent basis. Mr. Boodheshwar said that

he wanted to point out one item in the report; the completion of a master plan for the Lake Drive Park. He said that he would be working with the Preservation Foundation, Town staff members and the members of the Royal Park Homeowners Association to complete the project and present conceptual plans to the Town Council by June 2007.

Mr. Schechet said that he appreciated the report but wondered if there was a way to update the commission, between meetings rather than having to wait a month for the information. Mr. Boodheshwar said that he would be happy to e-mail the commission pertinent information as it became available.

VII. ADJOURNMENT – Mrs. Hickox made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:30. Seconded by Mr. Spaziani, all were in favor.

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
Record of Attendance 2007

<u>Regular Members</u>	1/10/07	3/14/07	5/9/07	9/12/07	11/14/07
Mr. Spaziani	P				
Mrs. Agnello	P				
Mr. Andrews	A				
Dr. Coffield	P				
Ms. Hickox	P				
Mr. Schechet	P				
Mr. Shulman	E				
<u>Alternate Members</u>					
Mr. Della-Giustina	P				
Mr. Jamison	P				
Mrs. Taca	P				

LEGEND: P = Present
 E = Excused
 U = Unexcused
 A = Absent Pending Classification as “Excused” or “Unexcused”

**RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
Conflict of Interest Record 2007**

<u>Regular Members</u>	1/10/07	3/14/07	5/09/07	9/12/07	11/14/07
Mr. Spaziani					
Mrs. Agnello					
Mr. Andrews					
Dr. Coffield					
Ms. Hickox					
Mr. Schechet					
Mr. Shulman					
<u>Alternate Members</u>					
Mr. Della-Giustina					
Mr. Jamison					
Mrs. Taca					

LEGEND: X = Conflict of Interest